

Defenders of Jerico VII

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Category: Halo

Genre: Adventure

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2006-05-01 03:29:43

Updated: 2006-05-01 03:29:43

Packaged: 2016-04-27 01:48:46

Rating: M

Chapters: 6

Words: 14,853

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: This story is about how 6 civilians defend Jerico VII as it is attacked by the covenant. This story takes place after the book The Fall of Reach in the Halo trilogy. Also it is based in the halo universe. Enjoy

1. Chapter 1: A Mile A Minute

****1st Calvary Militia â€" Defenders of Jerico VII****

Chapter 1: A Mile a Minute

Deep in the bowels of Jerico VII two gruff miners are hunched over an object that they were shining their helmet lights on. This object was particularly dangerous and is called C18, the highest explosive short of nuclear warheads. The more experienced miner, Jack Connors, was helping a rookie, Juan Morales. John found Juan in a spaceport living off of scraps from the food court. Jack took Juan under his wing and got him a job at the local titanium mine.

This job may sound insignificant but it is of the utmost importance. Because of the war the UNSC was loosing ships fast and each of those ships is made of thousands of tons of Titanium A. The UNSC had advanced the Ti. extraction by 800. Thus anyone not fighting the war was mining.

"After locking the timer in the C18 just arm the bomb and start the timer" said Jack

Juan pulled his ancient Zippo and cigarettes out of the chest pocket of his shirt to calm his nerves. Jack immediately snatched the lighter out of his hand.

"You will not bring a lighter to the mines" said Jack

"Okay, sorry amigo" said Juan

"Make sure you remember that or we all could die" said Jack

"I got it, just get off my back, I'm learning" said Juan

"Make sure you set the timer to 30 minutes, don't mess that up because if you take the timer out the C18 will explode your ass all over the wall" warned Jack

"Why can't we take the timer out of the C18" asked Juan

"Because we are using old military timers and they are made so that the Covenant can't take out the timers after we arm them" said Jack
"make sure you take a few inches off the slab before you insert the timer. This slab is a little bigger than we need for this job. If you cut after you insert the timer it will explode, I'll talk you through it."

"I don't think I should do it" said Juan

"Come on, if you want this job it's 90 percent explosives and this is the simplest one, you can do it" said Jack

"Okay" said Juan

Juan inserted the timer

"I told you to cut a few inches off!" yelled Jack

"Crap" said Juan

"Well this bomb will be a bit bigger than we need but, who cares we have tons of this stuff" said Jack

"Thirty is tres right" Juan questioned

"I don't speak Spanish, I thought you knew that" said Jack

"Your right I do" Juan reassured himself

Juan hit three, zero, zero on the timers face plate. As Jack realized what Juan had done his eyes grew as big as golf balls.

Over 50 vertical miles from Jack and Juan a UNSC Monitoring Satellite is in high orbit over the planet. A low level radar operator saw something on the radio that all human kind feared.

"Sarge you might want to see this" said Vic

The sergeant on the satellite walked over to Vic's station

"This better be good private" said Sarge

"Sir I have found Slipspace silhouettes that exactly match Covenant destroyers, Sir" reported Vic

"Are you sure the equipment isn't malfunctioning" asked Sarge

"I don't want to believe this anymore than you do, Sir" said Vic

Sarge walked back to the bridge of the vessel of the Satellite and started to give orders

"We have a code Red, Yes you heard me, Covenant forces are converging on us. Alert High Com, initiate the Cole Protocol, wipe and incinerate all navigational hard drives. I want this done five minutes ago. Move it ladies!"

"Oh Crap" said Jack "Let's get moving Juan we have 3 miles to run and only 3 minutes to do it in"

Juan and Jack ran faster than they ever had in their lives. Narrowly edging thousand foot chasms and low ceilings at top speed as they put distance between them and the bomb. They ran for one minute and they were only $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from the soon to be explosion.

"We aren't going fast enough" said Jack

"What the hell are we going to do about it" said Juan

They ran past a Titanium Transport Train that happened to have 2000 cars attached to the rear of it.

"Wait stop, whats that" panted Juan as he pointed to the car

"Get in" Jack panted back

Juan and Jack jumped into the car Jack (who was in the drivers seat) stared blankly at the control console.

"I don't know what to do" said Jack

"Just hit buttons, if you're wrong we die anyway" said Juan

Jack started hitting random buttons until he pushed a large lever foreword. The large lever appeared to be the accelerator. Unfortunately the car moved foreword at an antagonizing slow pace.

"We need to dump the Ti" said Juan

Jack continued to hit random buttons until he hit a red one that disconnected the cars from the train. Just as the cars disconnected from the train the train sped from 10 MPH to 300 MPH because of the colossal amount of weight that was lost and the force that remained constant. Juan and Jack were flattened to their seats as the g forces tore at their consciousness.

Normally an average human can maintain consciousness at speeds well over 300 miles per hour but these two individuals were breathing recycled air and the fans are not working to well this week.

After 10 seconds of this torment Juan blacked out and darkness was eating the corners of Jacks vision. Jack knew he had to stay awake to somehow stop the train. As he mentally fought for his conciseness he saw the tunnel they were speeding down dead-end in the distance.

"We need to stop" Jack thought.

Jack pulled the acceleration lever back to stop the train but because

the train relied on magnetic levitation as its source of rails this only dropped the total speed about a MPH per second. Then Jack had a sudden thought and pulled Juan's Zippo out of his pocket along with his cigarettes. Jack opened the Zippo and let all but a little of the lighter fluid drain from the antique lighter to the cigarette pack. Then he lit the lighter while holding his cupped palm in front of the flame because of the wind. Then he lit the pack and when he knew it was burning he threw it off the train. Then he worked quickly to secure both himself and Juan to their seats with the shoulder harnesses that they neglected to put on when they rushed on the train. A moment later the train stopped with an unreal suddenness only 10 feet from the tunnel wall.

The security features of mines on Jerico VII might be useful in explaining the previous events, such as why the train stopped. The mines on Jeico IV or any mine for that matter has extremely sensitive smoke detectors because of the fear that an explosion or fire will cause the mine to collapse. Therefore when a fire is detected all doors magnetically seal to prevent explosions from escaping the mine of origin. Another effect of the a fire detection is that all trains tracks reverse polarity to stop them where they are so if the mine does collapse the train will act as a support to keep the mine's tunnels open. Fortunately for Juan and Jack the door to the tram to the surface was broken that particular day and it would take approximately 10 seconds before the backup door could be activated.

Jack unbuckled Juan and himself and started to drag Juan to the door. The door started to close before Jack got there so he ran and ducked under the door. Then Jack set Juan down on the floor of the tram to the surface. They were safe until the boss found out that they had collapsed one of the most profitable mines in his possession.

Juan and Jack were not the only ones with problems in their futures. A certain general was facing similar odds. Captain de Blanc of the UNSC had the task of defending Jerico VII from attack and sending as much titanium to Reach as humanely possible. Herzog was not so worried about the second task but the first would test him in ways he would never believe. He knew that 20 Covenant destroyers were converging on Jerico VII, and it was anyone's bet that it wasn't to catch up on old times. Jerico VII possessed 23 destroyers, 1 flagship, and 5 Orbital Magnetic Acceleration Cannons (O'MACs). But any respectable general knew that this was not enough to defend a planet from the Covenant.

The UNSC's record against the Covenant would not fill any football team with pride. So far they had won zero battles against the Covenant. The humans usually could keep the Covenant at bay in the ground and with fewer soldiers than the Covenant had as well. However that is not the problem. When the Covenant took their fight to space was where the Humans always lost. Most of the time it would take four human destroyers to kill one Covenant ship and that was on good days. Needless to say Jerico VII was in for a good fight.

The army that Captain de Blanc was in charge of consisted of 50,000 soldiers. It was estimated that each Covenant destroyer contained 5000 soldiers. So for you mathematically challenged people that is 100,000 troops. De Blanc's Men are at a 1 to 2 disadvantage. Battle with the worst odds that the UNSC ever won with was 3 humans to every 4 Covenant and the UNSC just happened to have Spartan super soldiers

at their sides at that battle. The Spartans were currently light years away from their little planet and there is no hope of them coming to our rescue. The bottom line of all these figures is that Captain de Blanc needs more soldiers or he will be doomed from the air and the ground.

"But all the capable men and women on this planet are in the army except for the miners" de Blanc said to himself. De Blanc paused for a moment and thought about what he had just said. Then he started typing a letter to the governor of Jerico VII about a way to get more soldiers.

On the tram to the surface Juan had regained consciousness.

"Am I dead?" said Juan

"Yes you are" said Jack

"Did I go to heaven" said Juan

"Nope sorry this is Hell" stated Jack

"I wasn't that bad was I?" questioned Juan

"Well you did kill Jack" said Jack

"This looks a lot like the elevator I took down to the mine" said Juan

"Its not" said Jack

"Why are we going up?" said Juan starting to realize "you bastard!" Juan slugged Jack on the shoulder.

"Sorry, I couldn't resist" apologized Jack.

"We're going to get fired" said Juan

"Theses no avoiding that" said Jack "I thought we would just skip the 'getting fired part' and just join the army"

"Doesn't sound like such a bad idea" commented Juan

The two friends sat in silence for the last five minutes of the journey to the surface. When they got to the surface they emerged in a prefabricated concrete room that was the shower room. Both Jack and Juan took showers and changed into their street cloths and shoes. The style of clothing was not particularly advanced on Jerico VII most people wore the same sturdy work cloths to casual events that they wore to work. Jack wore pair of jeans and a Marines hoodie because if you wanted any cheap cloths on Jerico VII they had to be military. Juan wore an old pair of torn jeans and a camo jacket. Together they walked to Jack's Puma. The Puma was exactly like the Military Warthog in every way but the M41 LAAG Anti-Aircraft gun was gone in place of a pick-up truck bed. Currently the pick up bed held a few random soda cans and the sandbags and chains that he used for traction in the winter. (The Puma is a civilian class vehicle and does not have off road tires)

Jack hopped in the driver's seat and Juan in the passenger's seat.

Jack pulled his starting chip out of his pocket, inserted it into the steering column, and started the engine. The Puma purred to life with out a complaint. Jack drove out the parking lot and started to his apartment, lost in the rock that blared out of his speakers. After 10 minutes on the main street he turned off to his apartment complex. There he parked his car in the garage and shut down the engine. Jack and Juan climbed two flights of steps to his apartment. Jack put his finger on the bio-scan pad and the pad turned green allowing them to enter

If any respectable interior designer walked into Jacks apartment she would promptly have a heart attack and die. It was a shabby apartment with one bedroom one bath and a small kitchenette. The room that the door led into there was a living room of sorts. It was furnished with a worn couch that Juan had been sleeping on for the last few months, end tables and a coffee table that were made of empty plastic milk cartons in assorted colors. Sitting on the coffee table were three half-drunk beer cans and a projector that was currently projecting the Comedy Channel on the only clean white wall in the apartment. The projector had a few pixels out which resulted in small black squares in random places on the screen.

"Juan I'm going to get some sleep, g'night" said Jack

"See ya" said Juan

Jack walked to his bedroom which consisted of a mattress sitting on the ground and an old alarm clock sitting next to it. Jack unplugged the alarm clock and dropped on to his bed fully clothed. He was so tired from running away from the explosion that as soon as his head hit his pillow he was sleeping.

2. Chapter 2: Bad Dreams

Chapter 2: Bad Dreams

John was following his father across a wooded forest carrying a backpack. The backpack was heavy and filled with hard objects that forced their way into the small of his back. They encountered a thorn bush, Jack's father walked right through the bush but Jack stopped, fearful of the prickly pain that the bush would inflict on him.

"Dad, I can't get through" said Jack

Jack's father pulled out a black machete and chopped the bush down
"Hurry or we won't catch the Drinol"

"Daddy what is a Drinol" said Jack

"You will find out when we kill it" said Jack's father

Jack and his father continued across the woods until the trees thinned out and they came to a clearing. There they saw a huge creature that must have stood 20 feet tall. Currently, it was hunched over its most recent kill. Its back was a pale brownish gold and looked very rough and almost scaly. The prey it was devouring was hidden from Jack by the creatures own enormous bulk. There was a trail of blood behind the Drinol that lead out to the middle of a

field where there were signs of a struggle between the Drinol and what ever poor creature the Drinol caught. Jack's father took a weapon of his shoulder and pumped the action to force one round into the chamber. Although Jack did not know this at the time his fathers weapon was a Remington 870 12 Gauge Shotgun and the round that he loaded into the chamber were not ordinary buckshot rounds but Teflon coated slugs. Jack's father motioned for him to stay in the woods while he moved out into the field. His father stopped 20 yards from the creature and brought the shotgun to his shoulder, aimed and fired.

The slug impacted creature in the left side of his back, but surprisingly the creature did not fall to the ground like he thought it would. The beast turned around and for the first time Jack got a look at the creature. It stood on two legs that were as wide as tree trunks and similar to elephant legs with hoofs like a horse but 50 times larger. Its arms were as thick as telephone poles and had lobster like claws on the ends of them. These pincers were now covered with blood. Its head is perched on top of its body with a short wide neck. The head its self was the size of a large pumpkin. His bloody teeth jutted out of his jaw at odd angles and his eyes were a vile yellow that showed the rage in the creature's heart. The Drinol started to charge towards Jack's father and he reacted by firing and pumping his shotgun at the creatures left pectoral until he had used the 4 rounds in the shotguns magazine. Jack's father dropped his shotgun and pulled out his black machete but, before he could land a hit on the beast it back-handed him with his massive claw and he went flying until he hit the ground 10 feet away.

Jack heard his father grunt "Get the gun"

By a stroke of luck Jack immediately knew what he was talking about. His father had put a large silver handgun in his backpack before they set out into the woods. His father had told him in the car that if he should ever need to use the gun to protect himself he should just tap, rack, shoot. Jack slowly taped the handguns safety off, racked the slide, and aimed at the beast that was mauling his father. Slowly he pulled the trigger and the colossal kick from the gun shook Jacks small body.

Jack had not done as well as his father at aiming his rounds, the bullet drove through the beast's leg and left a large exit wound. The Drinol dropped to its knees but it would not be destroyed so easily. It slowly limped to where the shot came from. Jack fired 7 more times each shot badly placed so that it hit an arm or a leg or missed all together. But 7 .50 Caliber Armor Piercing Sabot Rounds could not be ignored by any creature and the wounds took their toll on both the hunter and its prey. The shots that Jack fired broke both of his elbows and caused him pain that his young mind had never experienced before. Jack walked over the dead Drinol to his father's still breathing body that had been impaled by the Drinol's pincers.

"Dad are you okay" said Jack

"I'm fine son, I'm proud of you for killing it, you saved me" said his father

"Dad you need help, I'm going to get help" said Jack

"It's to late for me just get yourself out" said his father

"No! Don't say that your going to be okay" said Jack

"Goodbye son"

3. Chapter 3: Smashing Heads

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Jack awoke in cold sweat with his mind reeling from the dream he just had. It was still dark out side and he couldn't tell the time because he had turned off the alarm clock. Jack rose from his bed and headed to the bathroom to get a shower. He undressed and got into the shower. He turned it on hot and let the water lull his distressed mind. Jack was never one for long showers so he quickly washed and dressed in another pair of cloths.

Jack knew that he could not live as a civilian any longer. The pay the mine provided was too small to afford his rent and food for two people. He was deep in debt.

He knew that credit card companies and banks could not bother him while he was in the military. He decided that he would join the military.

Jack walked over to his bed and took of the top mattress to reveal the box spring mattress. He pulled his pocket knife out of his pocket and cut the cloth layer off of the box spring mattress. In doing so he uncovered a secret compartment that held three matte black attaché cases. The first two were about 3 ½ feet long and 10 inches wide and the second one was 1 ½ feet square. They all had bioscan locks. Jack took them both out and underneath were 10 old, metal army ammunition boxes. He pulled them out 2 by 2 until there were no more in the compartment. Then he slid the top mattress back on the bed.

He grabbed the smallest attaché case and sat on the bed. He put his thumb to the biolock, the display turned green, and two clicks emanated from the case. Jack slowly lifted the lid and revealed a massive silver hand gun and 3 loaded clips. The gun was an IMI Desert Eagle .50AE. One of less than a hundred left in the universe. Its power is legendary among the military and civilians alike. With armor piercing rounds it could pierce 4 inches of Titanium A battle plate and its bullets could travel 10 miles if they did not hit anything. From the back of the handle to muzzle it was as long as Jacks forearm and the .50 cal rounds that it fired were as long as his thumb but slightly wider. It weighed 4 ½ pounds unloaded and 5 ½ loaded. If you did not grip this gun with two hands when you fired even a grown man with healthy bones would suffer a stress fracture or have the guns recoil crack you in the head. Jack slotted a clip into the action and aimed at an imaginary Covenant in front of him. Then his imagining stopped and he took the clip out of the action and put both the gun and the clip back in the case.

Jack heard a sound in his living room and he got up to investigate it. When he entered the living room he saw that Juan had woken up but still remained on the couch, his eyes fixed on the news channel that was being projected.

"20 Covenant destroyers have been spotted in the 5000 Light years from the Jerico System." The female anchor put her cupped hand to her ear to presumably make out the directions that the stage crew were sending to her "This is Captain De Blanc the General of the forces of Jerico VII"

The news anchor disappeared replaced by a gruff middle aged man in a military dress uniform. He was standing out side of the Alamo the greatest military base on Jerico VII. "People of Jerico VII as you know Covenant forces have converged on our planet. In light of this terrible reality I have ordered the draft of all able bodied civilians into the Civilian Militia, a new division in the military. You will join with people in your area to fight for our planet. This is your countries hour of need, Fight for her, for your family and for your self's"

The General phased out and was replaced with the news anchor. "All able bodied citizens are to go to the nearest military base to receive their military training at six o'clock in the morning this Thursday and now we return to our regularly scheduled programs."

"It looks like we have to join the military now" said Juan

"If we are going to join the military I don't want you using the crappy weapons they will issue you. Come on I've got some better ones for you."

"How do you have guns, I thought they were illegal" said Juan

"They are, but I will never give up my weapons for any politician" said Jack

Jack walked into his room and Juan followed. Juan gazed at the pile of boxes on the floor and whistled.

"Wow the cops would have a field day with you" said Juan

"This was well hidden a minute ago" said Jack

"Where" said Juan

"In my bed" said Jack as he lifted the top mattress up to reveal a secret compartment in the second mattress.

"So which gun am I going to use" said Juan

Jack walked over to the pile of boxes and grabbed one of the larger attaché cases. Then he put it on his bed and put his thumb to the biolock. It turned green and 4 clicks sounded from the case. Jack opened the case to reveal a Rifle. The rifle was strange looking. It was about three feet long with a 14 inch barrel that had a flash suppressor on the end. The trigger and handle were further up the rifle than usual and it did not have a trigger guard but a full hand guard that was futuristic looking. On the top of this firearm a scope was mounted that had two knobs, for focus and magnification.

"I'm don't know much about firearms, could you fill me in here" said Juan

"The Rifle is a Steyr Aug A1. It is more of a long range assault

rifle" said Jack as he handed the A1 to Juan

Juan took it in his arms and put his eye to the scope and put his finger on the trigger.

"Juan don't put your finger on the trigger if you aren't going to fire" said Jack

"Okay" said Juan

"Here's the clip it goes in the stock right there" said Jack as he handed him the clip and pointed to the place where the clip went

Juan jacked the clip into the gun.

"Flip the safety if you are going to have live ammo in the gun" said Jack

"Where is the safety" asked Juan.

"Right here" explained Jack as he pointed out the safety.

Juan looked the Aug A1 over and then said "Thanks Jack"

"No problem, and in a few minutes we are going to see if they work" said Jack

"They?" said Juan

Jack walked over to the pile of weaponry and picked up the other large attaché case and opened it. The lid flipped up and revealed a steel and polished oak shotgun and a shiny black combat knife. The gun was a 12-gauge 870 Remington Magnum Express. He looked down the iron sights and nodded to himself in approval. The Knife was in a boot sheath. He strapped the knife to his leg and put the shotgun on his back with the shoulder strap

Then he took the small attaché case by the handle and opened it, inserted a clip into the action. Then he set the gun down and removed the foam liner of the attaché case that revealed a leather holster for the Dessert Eagle. The holster had slots for 3 clips. Jack put the holster around his waist and holstered the Eagle and slotted 3 clips into the holster as well.

"Holy Crap, don't you have enough" said Juan

"Probably not, let's go" said Jack

Jack walked out of the house with Juan on his tail. As Jack passed the front door he did not bother to lock it. After about 30 more seconds of walking they arrived at his Puma.

"Drop your guns in the car" said Jack

After they dropped the guns in the bed of the truck they went back up to the apartment to get more armament from Jack's bed room. Jack and Juan both came back to the garage with 2 ammo boxes a piece. Jack came through the door first and saw the 5 people looting his truck.

"Crap, go back hurry" said Jack

"What is it" said Juan after they had gone back up the stairs

"Some people are looting my truck" said Jack

"Crap is right" said Juan "They've got your guns"

"Give me that ammo case" said Jack

Jack took the case and opened it to reveal a few boxes of 12 gauge shells and a black machete. Jack took the machete.

"Do we really have to kill them?" said Juan

"Only if things get ugly out there" said Jack "come on let's go"

Jack gave Juan the machete and took the knife out of his boot for himself.

Jack whispered "follow me"

Jack crouched down and snuck around the parked cars until he was facing the door, the tail gate of the Puma, and the backs of the armed looters. Jack pointed at the bed of the truck and started towards it. Then he slowly crawled into the bed careful not to make any noise and then helped Juan into the bed. Jack motioned to the 50 Pound sand bags and signaled for Juan to pick one up. Jack put one of the tire chains around his neck and rose up from the car with the sandbag and a soda can in hand. Jack threw the can to the stairway that they exited from. The looters dropped they joints and went to investigate. Jack raised the bag over his head and threw it like a soccer player would when the ball goes out of bounds. The bag impacted the head of the thug that had the Aug A1. The thug fell to the ground. Then Juan threw his bag at the thug with the shotgun and he fell just like the first thug. Then Jack jumped out of the truck and approached the thug with the Eagle.

A looter was just turning around when Jack got to him. Jack had the tire chain wrapped around his fist when he delivered the punch to his gut. The thug's right hand contracted causing his index finger to pull the trigger of the Eagle. The trigger let loose the bolt that hit the .50 Cal bullet in the chamber of the Eagle. The bullet then traveled through the air and hit the ceiling of the parking complex. The bullet impact caused concrete shrapnel to fly through the air as the bullet created a dinner plate sized crater in the ceiling. The looter then felt the recoil of the Eagle force his elbow to bend and hit himself right between the eyes. Subsequently the pain of these two blows put the thug in a state of unconsciousness.

Meanwhile Juan had also jumped out of the truck after his throw and picked up the shotgun. Juan then approached a thug armed with a pipe and delivered a blow to the small of his back with the butt of the gun. The thug fell to the ground and he kicked him in the head. He was out like a light bulb. Then he saw a thug getting the drop on Jack as he picked up the Eagle. The thug pulled a length of chain around his throat.

"Drop you weapons or I'll kill him" said the thug to everyone in the garage as he searched hurriedly for the second assailant.

Then Juan rolled from underneath the puma swept the looter's feet from under him. Then as Jack rolled away from his attacker Juan delivered a blow to the looter's chest with the metal pipe as he struggled to come to his feet. After the blow the thug did not try to get up. Juan then held out a hand to Jack. Jack took his hand and Juan hauled him to his feet.

"Thanks" said Jack

"It was the least I could do" said Juan

The looter Juan had just laid out was laying face up and had blood in random spots all over his front. Juan spotted this and wondered why he was so bloody. He had not been hit with a shotgun. Then Juan saw Jack collapse on the ground face down and Juan knew why the looter was so bloody.

4. Chapter 4: The Alamo

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Jack had at least 15 puncture wounds in his back from the shrapnel that came from the ceiling. He was bleeding profusely.

"Jack, where are your keys?" said Juan

"Back pocket" grunted Jack

Juan took the keys and half-helped, half-carried Jack into the front seat. Then Juan collected the weapons that were on the ground and threw them in the back of the truck. Then Juan got into the drivers seat of the Puma.

"Jack, I don't know how to drive this thing" said Juan

"Put the key in the ignition" grunted Jack

"Where is the ignition" said Juan

"Forget it, Drag me to the drivers seat" said Jack

"Are you sure you can drive" said Juan

"JUST DO IT!" said Jack

Juan moved Jack to the driver's seat and ran around the Puma and got in the passenger's seat. Jack took the keys and inserted one into the ignition and put the Puma in gear.

Jack painfully drove the car to the Alamo. Which is a military station that was nearer than the hospitable from there current position. Jack was going 90 mph on a 30 road but when you factor in his condition it is justified. After 30 minutes of driving Jack finally got to the Alamo.

The Alamo was an impressive installation. It contained countless .50

Cal anti-aircraft guns, 10 tomahawk missile silos, a atmospheric MAC cannon, Factories for small arms, small ammunition, light and heavy vehicles, underground farming facilities, and even a small ship yard for repairing space ships. When the humans make a stand on this planet this is where it will be.

Currently Jack did not give a rat's ass about all of this information. All he cared about was getting past the 100 or more cars in front of him.

"Where did all these people come from" said Jack.

Juan was still struck with awe by the enormity of the installation.

"Fine, we are going around" said Jack.

Jack turned the puma hopped over the first curb, and drove the last two hundred yards on the outgoing road for the installation. At the end he just hopped the curb and slipped in the Alamo. Several feet after that he met the security checkpoint. Two men in forest camo got out of their air conditioned booth and walked up to the puma.

"What is your business here" said the first soldier

"We need to use the hospitable" Jack said with effort showing in his voice.

The larger man's eyes glanced over to the blood soaking Jacks shirt.

"O' my God" said the larger man to the smaller one "Look at his back"

The smaller man's eyes also stared at Jacks back

"We can't let you drive like that" said the smaller man

"I know where the Hospitable is so if you don't let me through, I will break your little road block" Jack grunted.

The smaller man started to speak "Just give meâ€|â€|" but Jack hit the accelerator before he could finish.

The Puma lurched out of park and immediately broke the pathetic stop arm that was connected to the booth like a chainsaw though a toothpick. As the Puma burned rubber away from the security booth the two officers fired stun rounds at it. One round whizzed past Juan's ear, another broke the puma's right tail light and a final one broke the right rear-view mirror. After they were 100 yards from the security booth the guards stopped shooting.

"It looks like they are calling in backup" said Juan

Jack stayed silent as he took the pain from his wounds.

After another 5 minutes of going on red lights and doing 70 in the 30 zone they finally got to the Hospitable. Jack skidded to a stop and let go of his consciousness. It was up to Juan now.

Near by another warrior was in an equally desperate situation. Captain de Blanc was the one solely in charge of the defense of Jerico VII. That meant at this moment Blanc was diligently analyzing his forces and how he could use them to defend this planet. It wasn't looking good. He had calculated that with out the civilian militia they would be slaughtered. But even with that asset their would still be inadequate troops to defend the whole planet. Their was only one solution, the Spartans. The Spartans were a highly classified group of elite soldiers that were further enhanced with Biomechanical suits what were code named Mjolnir for the Greek god of war. They would kill thousands of Covenant and they would just be warming up. If the Captain had these soldiers then their was a fair chance that Blanc could defend the planet. But currently the Spartans were in the core worlds on military police assistance. It was a three week journey from there to Jerico VII. It would be tough to survive very long without the Spartans.

Jack was lying face down on a hospitable bed when he came to. He could taste the remnence of anastasia in his mouth so he knew he had been operated on. Then he felt the catheter that was sticking out of his forearm. He assumed the liquid that was being pumped out of that catheter was helping him ignore the stitches in his back. Jack turned over to start getting up and immediately he felt many white hot knives plunge into his back. He screamed in pain. After a few seconds in agony two nurses plowed through his door flipped Jack back over and upped the dose of morphine that was coming out of the bag.

One nurse whispered to him "Don't do that again or you could rip the stitches."

Jack could not reply because the morphine put him to sleep.

Sometime later Jack awoke and this time the catheter was taken out of his arm and their was no pain in his back. Jack got up with out pain and proceeded to find out what was going on. The first thing he saw was the T.V. mounted in his room. It was playing a news report.

"Thousands of people coming to volunteer for service in the Civilian Defense Militia. The line into the enlistment center is almost a kilometer long. Civilians have been told that they could use any weapon that they owned after they had passed a test on there usage of the gun. So as a result all people volunteering have a weapon of one kind or another. This is the first legal congregation of firearms in 200 years." The news anchor went to interview man in line "Sir, what are your reasons for volunteering"

"I've just come here to defend my home and my country" said the man as he adjusted a huge rifle on his shoulder.

"I'm glad there are so many people like you out there" said the reporter.

"You should join us" said the man to the reporter.

Then the T.V. went to a commercial break.

Jack slowly got up, fearful of the pain that he had before. After he got up painlessly Juan walked into the room.

"Hey Jack how are you doing" said Juan

"Fine, when can I leave this hole" said Jack

"Now. It's not like they can stop us" said Juan

"Ok let's go" said Jack

Jack got up and found his cloths and then went into the bathroom to change. Shortly after that two nurses entered the room

"Where is Mr. Conners" said the first nurse.

"Umm, I don't know, I got in this room by accident" lied Juan

"O no, I lost another one, Dr. Potter is going to kill me" said the second nurse.

The two nurses left the room and right after that Jack exited the bathroom with the clothes that he came into the hospitable in complete with blood stains and shrapnel holes.

"Where did you park the Puma" said Jack

"3rd floor of the parking garage" said Juan

5. Chapter 5: Boot

Chapter 5: Boot

Juan and Jack walked to the parking garage though the walkway over the main street. After a few minutes of walking the pair got to the Puma and Jack unlocked the door and jumped in. Juan followed and soon they were parking in the enlistment parking lot or more realistically they were parking 3 kilometers away because there were so many people enlisting. Juan and Jack got out of the Puma and grabbed their weapons. Jack took the Shotgun and Desert Eagle and Juan took the Aug A1 and the machete. Jack filled a military duffle with all the ammo it would carry and Juan took one that had all the ammo he would need for the Aug.

Jack and Juan walked the now one kilometer that it took to get to the line for the enlistment line. When Jack got there he saw many men and surprisingly women that were armed the tooth with ever kind of gun you could think of. He saw military S2 Snipers, heirloom shotguns, .45 revolvers, RPGs, glocks, 30-06 and 30-30 hunting rifles, and even old military edition M16s. Many of the people looked like they were from the county and not city folk that lived near the base. Many of the teenage boys that were here were looked like they could be linebackers on a pro team and even most of the women had a good amount of muscle on them. These were the right people to defend the planet.

One of the people waiting in the line walked up to him. He was a teenage male that was small but looked scrappy. He was lugging a Military S2 Sniper Rifle and a large steel ammo case. He walked up to Jack and shook his hand.

"Hi, my name is Keith Pounds"

"Jack Connors"

Juan extended his hand and Keith shook it with a hearty shake" I'm Juan Morales nice to meet you"

"So how long have you been waiting?" said Jack.

"About four hours" said Keith "but I know people that have been waiting for days"

"Wow, this sure is a good turn out" said Juan

"Yeah, I never though so many people would come, It is expected that we have 2,000 and that's not even counting the people that are waiting out here"

"So where did you get your S2. I heard that they are really hard to lay your hands on" said Jack

"Its from my father, He was a special opps in the Brushfire Wars. He was a crack shot and I can only hope that he passed that on to me" explained Keith.

"I got these from by dad too" said Jack as he motioned to the shotgun and the Dessert Eagle.

"Wow a Dessert Eagle" exclaimed Keith "Those are really rare"

"It's been passed down from generation to generation in my family" explained Jack "It has been used in 5 or 6 wars and many hunting trips, I wouldn't trade it for anything"

"I think I have something you could use" said Keith as he rummaged through his ammo canister "Here it is" Keith pulled out a 5x scope with a sight rail that looked like it could attach to a large pistol. "I had this for a long time but I never knew what gun to put it on and now that I have seen your Dessert Eagle I think I know what gun that is"

"Thanks, I was looking for something like this for a long time but I never could find one" Jack said as he took the scope and tried to mount it on the Eagle. Jack pulled out his pocket knife and unscrewed 4 bolts on his gun, slid the scope on it and reattached the bolts. If it was possible the eagle looked even more dangerous than it did before. Jack looked down the scope and was impressed by the distance that he could see. "Wow this is great, it's got a polarized lens and adjustable scope range, and I can still use the iron sites, Thanks Keith, I should really be able to kill some Covenant bastards now"

"That's all we can hope for isn't it" said Keith

After many hours of talking and waiting Jack, Keith and Juan had finally made it to the enlistment office which was a large block-like building with small windows and large doors. Before they got to go in the office there weapons were checked to make sure that their actions were empty and their safeties were on. Keith was the first one to the Enlistment desk.

"Name" said the officer at the desk

"Keith Pounds"

"License and registration"

Keith handed a drivers license to the officer

"Good, everything seems to be in order, go through the next door to get directions to your barracks."

Both Jack and Juan went through the same process and were given A-6 as their barracks. Juan, Jack and Keith got on a drab green troop transport truck and were transported half a mile to the A-6 barracks. The barracks was a rectangular building, about 50' by 20'. It was filled with many rows of bunk beds according to what Jack saw. They were taken directly into the building and assigned their bunks alphabetically so Jack was bunked with a kid named Dexter Foley. Folly looked about 18 years old. He was tall with a slight build that did not look suitable for the military. He had flaming red hair and green eyes that contrasted oddly on his face but also gave him a look of danger.

"I am Mike Herzog, your sergeant for the duration of boot camp. I enjoy long walks on the beach and expressing my feelings"

One unfortunate person risked a chuckle

"ARE YOU LAUGHING AT ME MAGGOT" yelled Herzog.

"Yes"

Herzog pushed him flag on his back and yelled "YOU WILL ALWAYS ANSWER ME WITH YES SIR, MAGGOT" ordered Herzog. "And for the rest of you maggots, these are the rules; one: you will always address a superior officer, such as myself, as Sir. DO YOU HEAR ME?"

A small sir yes sir echoed out of the congregation.

"WHAT WAS THAT? My grandma could do better than that you maggots, and guess what she has no teeth. LET'S TRY THAT AGAIN!"

"SIR YES SIR" roared through the soldiers.

"WHAT WAS THAT?"

"SIR YES SIR" again thundered through the A-6 barracks.

The usual Full Metal Jacket rant lasted for thirty minutes after that. Sergeant Herzog earned the nickname Popeye from his soldiers because of his unusual taste for spinach and his tendency to curse like a sailor. Over the course of the next month the soldiers in the A-6 barracks would be tested, trained, and strengthened by their Sergeant. A few soldiers dropped out when live rounds were used in the obstacle course. Those people became army factory workers and did other jobs that required hard labor. When they learned how to use guns for the first time they used standard issue military guns but they were beat up and most of the time they did not work. Eventually they were taught how to use their own weapons with full accuracy and precision. After two weeks of nearly constant combat and weapons

training the Civilian Militia was ready to defend Jerico VII from the forces of the Covenant. It turned out that Keith was a very accurate sniper. On one drill he hit 100 of the targets in the bull's eye in 30 seconds which was 1 minute before the closest competitor. Jack was doing better at skeet and only missed 1 clay pigeon out of 50. Juan understood battle strategy better than ever. He knew how to use cover better than anyone else in A-6. He could pop out of any unexpected place like a wack-a-mole. One time he even hung upside down from the rafters in one particular mission and took out 6 enemies and swung back up before anyone knew what had happened.

Dexter Foley was a very interesting individual. His strengths were very specialized. When the platoon was introduced to the Warthog obstacle course he aced the course and beat the current record for speed. He obviously knew his way around an engine because in his spare time he fixed the brass's vehicles and earned extra food, shower time, and they even slipped him a little booze for his work. Some people had a grudge against him for this.

After over a month of training even the harsh Sergeant Herzog thought that they were ready for combat "I have spent four miserable weeks with you and in spite of every time that I cursed that you would fail, you have passed. But this is the easiest part of your life as a soldier. The next few weeks will be the hardest you have ever experienced. You will lose friends, family, and brothers, but you will live on and put that behind you. Such is the life of a soldier. Good luck and Godspeed privates." Then Herzog left and a Captain de Blanc walked in, all of A-6 snapped to attention.

"Hello I am Captain de Blanc, I have come congratulate you on your successful completion of boot camp. You have stepped up to dedicate yourselves to the defense of your home planet and your fellow humans. You will now be divided into your patrols that you will fight in. These patrols have been chosen by Sergeant Herzog and will not be changed." de Blanc read off the patrols for a few minutes until he got to Jacks. "And in Patrol number eleven is Jack Connors, Juan Morales, Keith Pounds, Dexter Foley, Greg Cambell, and Frank O'Neal." De Blanc read through a few more patrols of six soldiers. "These people are your new family, you will fight together to defend our planet. The first person I named in every patrol is the leader of that patrol. You will now go to your posts and wait for the Covent bastards to come and get whats coming to'em!"

6. Chapter 6: Round 'em and Move 'em Out

Chapter 6: Round 'em and Move 'em Out

de Blanc left and they were taken to the real military barracks not the training ones they had been staying in for the last month. Boot had changed many of the trainees. All had lost fat and gained muscle but their were more obvious changes. All of the trainees were mentally sharper as well and they all could work as a team with any one in Platoon A-1. Herzog had taught them more than how to drop the f-bomb 52 times in a sentence, he had taught them how to work as a team. That skill would help them more than all of the brute force in the universe.

At the new barracks they were bunked with their patrol members to let them get to know each other better so that they could function as a

team in the future. The days at the new barracks were much more laid back than the ones in boot. Their days consisted of running, weightlifting, and shooting in the morning, fortifying the Alamo in the afternoon until about five and then free time until nine which was lights out. It was much easier and less stressful than boot.

Frank O'Neal, the first new person in their squad, was an easy to talk to person that meshed with the rest of the squad seamlessly. He was 6'9" tall, weighed 350 pounds and was very muscular. He had a particular build, his back, arm, and chest muscles were much larger than his leg muscles. Not to say that his legs were small they were just smaller than his chest. This build helped him do many things that other soldiers couldn't. He beat everyone in the pushup contest where he did 1000 push-ups before Herzog told him to f-ing stop. One other thing that this helped him do was archery. Frank owned a 200 pound pull bow that he practiced with every day. With all of the power its arrows had it could puncture one inch of battle plate. Frank was also very accurate with his arrows and could hit a bull's eye at 200 yards. He wanted to use it in combat but regulations forbade him. Instead he was placed on the heavy weapons duty which consisted of operating rocket launchers. His strength helped him carry the 20 or so 102mm rockets in a massive backpack and fire the rockets with complete accuracy. During the four hour down time at the end of the day Frank was often seen fletching and repairing arrows or shooting his bow.

Greg Cambell was a hunter in every way. He was very good at being silent and sneaky. He could use any weapon at any range he could also drive any vehicle on any surface. However his passion was music. He would always be playing some type of old Slam-Bam music. He had very particular tastes. His weapon of choice is the old M-4 from the brushfire wars. He used his ancient weapon very efficiently and accurately.

Dexter was also busy in his free time. He is currently restoring some classic vehicles for the brass, fixing warthogs, and militarizing some ATVs from home. By far the most interesting to the soldiers were the ATVs. Dex had removed the flimsy plastic mud flaps and body panels with an inch of high carbon steel. He coated the body panels and mud flaps with plasma reflective tape that had a digitized urban camo patterns. He replaced their 150 hp electric motors with 300 hp motors. He took off the old racing tires that used to be on them and put on high grade military tires. He also added all of the bells and whistles of a normal military vehicle such as gun racks, wenches, communication systems, high powered halogen lights, a spare tire on the back, and room for a second passenger/gunner. Some of the ATVs had special features. One of the ATVs had an electric supercharger, one had a bow case mounted on the side, and the third has a 30 mm chain gun on the back. Dex stored these vehicles in the garage where he was restoring the classic cars for the brass.

For one week their life style was relaxed and peaceful and they had good times, but all of that was about to change. On November 5th 2815 the Covenant closed in on Jerico VII. De Blanc was currently on Jercio's flagship the Colorado. He was commanding the whole fleet from the bridge of the massive cruiser. He had the ships in a phalanx to defend their 5 precious O'MACs. The 20 Covenant ships were coming in at a similar formation. De Blanc gave the order to fire all MAC cannons. 29 white hot massive projectiles flew through the air at the

Covenant formation like a volley of flaming arrows. Unfortunately the MAC rounds only weakened the enemy ships only 5 enemy ships were destroyed because those had been hit by the massive O'MAC rounds.

The Covenant returned fire just after the first volley of MAC rounds left. A wave of fluorescent plasma burned towards them. The destroyers were told by de Blanc to make a shield in front of the O'MACs. The shield was successful but destroyed all participants in it. A total of 15 ships destroyed. The second volley of MAC rounds was placed better. The human cruisers concentrated fire on just a few ships and not all of them at once. They disabled only 3 ships this time because the Covenant ships had charged their shields to full capacity after the jump from slip space. The second Covenant folly came even more powerful this time and destroyed the remaining destroyers that were defending the O'MAC cannons. De Blanc took a pelican from the Colorado to the Alamo to coordinate the ground defense. The O'MAC cannons and the Colorado were destroyed shortly after de Blanc had left. The entire battle had taken 10 minutes. Human casualties 100 Covenant casualties 35.

Juan, Jack, Greg, Keith, Dexter, and Frank woke up in the middle of the night to a loud screeching alarm. It was a call to arms bell. Jack ripped his Eagle from under his bunk and stripped the tape from it that had been holding it to the bed. Then he racked the slide, punched the safety, and slipped it under his belt in the small of his back. Jack had worn combat cloths to bed for this reason. He knew they would not have worked them hard right before a serious battle so the Covenant had to be coming. The rest of his squad had to change quickly. Jack put on his holster that contained three more clips for the Eagle.

By the time all six soldiers had gathered their weapons and started hoofing to HQ. Jack noticed something while he was running; Dexter was not with them. Jack took little notice of this fact because five other patrols had come up behind them. They kept pace for a few minutes until Jack noticed something else that was strange; the sound of an electric motor. Jack turned his head and saw Dexter on an ATV that was pulling two others.

"Hey, I've got a present for you" said Dexter

"Patrol Double One get your asses over to Dex" said Jack

"I love presents" said Greg after he got to Dexter

"Okay Jack your driving mine, Juan and Keith you're on this one but Juan is driving, and Greg and Frank you're on this one but Frank is driving."

"Why do we have to listen to you" said Keith to Dexter

"Because this is the best way to utilize all of your combat skills" said Dexter

"Why am I on the back" said Keith

"You are a sniper and you cannot snipe and drive at the same time" said Dexter

"Okay" said Keith

"What to we call these things" said Frank

"Mongooses" said Dexter

"Why Mongoose sir?" said Juan

"Because All Terrain Vehicle is to hard to say in conversion, son" said Dexter

"But why Mongoose, It doesn't look like a Mongoose" said Juan

"Just shut your trap and drive" said Dexter.

The whole patrol hopped on his respective Mongoose, stored their weapons on the gun racks, started with minimal searching for controls, and floored it to HQ. The six of them got envious looks on the way to HQ from the other soldiers hoofing it. Juan had obviously got the hang of his Mongoose because he pulled a power slide parallel parking job at HQ.

"Stop showing off" said Keith "you're making me sick"

The rest of the patrol got of their Mongooses and walked over to the HQ entrance.

"Patrol Sergeants only" grunted the HQ guard.

"Am I the patrol Sergeant" said Jack

"I guess so" said Dexter.

Jack walked in to the HQ and was met with only about four other Sergeants talking to Sergeant Herzog.

"Jack just the man I wanted to see" said Herzog.

"Hello" said Jack

"What are you forgetting" said Herzog.

"Sir, Hello, sir" barked Jack

"That's better" said Herzog "I have a special assignment for you; we are running low on defense vehicles for the troop carriers that are evacuating the civilians from the nearby area and I just happen to know your patrol has three unregulation vehicles"

"About that sir" said Jack

"You aren't in trouble Jack, I need you to use those vehicles to defend three of the troop carriers" said Herzog.

"Yes Sir" said Jack

"I need you to defend troop carriers three, eight, and five" said Herzog

"Where are they sir" said Jack

"Ask Dexter, he should know, he worked on them." said Herzog

"It'll be done sir" said Jack

"Good luck soldier" said Herzog

"Thank you sir" said Jack

Jack left the HQ and walked over to his Patrol.

"Hey Guys we have a mission" said Jack "We have to defend troop carriers three, eight, and five as they pick up civilians from the county."

"Hey I worked on three, eight, and five. They were bad, I almost had to replace their engines." said Dexter

"Well do they work now" said Keith.

"I was in the middle of fixing them, I did most of it but some things I just didn't have the time for." said Dexter

"Okay, where are they Dex" asked Jack

"Garage 8 on the other side of the Alamo" said Dex

"We better get a move on then" said Jack

Patrol 11 jumped on their rides and floored it to garage 8. Within a few minutes they had covered the distance to garage 8.

"The cavalry has arrived" said one driver.

"When are we leaving" said Jack.

"Now, we were waiting for you" the driver told Jack.

"Let's go" said Juan.

The three troop transport trucks started up and rolled out of the garage. The Mongooses started up and quickly moved in front of the transport.

"Pick a transport and stick with it" Jack said over the radio.

Jack heard two double clicks of acknowledgement over the radio.

"Hey Sarge, go left at the next intersection." the driver said to Jack

"Got it" said Jack

The three transports split off in opposite directions to pick up the civilians of Alamo city. Jack and Dexter's Mongoose caught up with another troop transport being lead by a Warthog with 3 people in it; one driver, one gunner, and one rocketeer in the side seat holding a M19 SSM Rocket Launcher.

"Hey lets work together" said the driver of the Warthog over the radio.

"Okay. Transports line up in single file. Warthog take the rear we got the front" said Jack over the radio. Jack heard three double clicks of acknowledgement and the vehicles moved into formation.

"Where are we going" asked Jack.

"To St. Vincent High School" answered one of the drivers

"Why are we going their" questioned Dexter.

"All of the people have been ordered to go to the nearest school to their homes so we just pick them up their" explained the Warthog driver "Make a right at this light."

The caravan was nearing the school when they saw a U shaped ship drop from the sky flanked by two alien fighter craft. A Longsword human fighter jet came and distracted the two smaller fighter crafts. The Warthog had pulled up front and the side gunner lunched two rockets at the landing craft. The rockets spiraled through the air and impacted on the landing craft but did not inflict much damage because a transparent shield blocked the missiles.

"Shit" swore the rocketeer.

"We'll just have to kill them when they land" said the warthog driver.

"Hey, come with me the transports better be able to handle their self's for a while" said Jack

"We'll circle them counter-clockwise until we get them all." said Dexter.

"Roger that" said the warthog driver

"I'll keep my thrower on the left side so I don't burn you, so you have to always keep our enemies on the left" said Dexter to Jack

"Got it"

The transport opened its twin hulls and dropped eight enemies on the ground in the parking lot of the school; two elites, two jackals, and four grunts. They started sprinting toward the school. Jack punched the accelerator and activated the electric super charger to get to the school. Jack transformed one of the grunts into a living speed bump until the rear tire broke his spine and he died. Dexter opened up his flamethrower and lit up a blue elite like a Christmas tree. Seconds after the elite flung himself on the ground to try to put out the flames the Warthog charged in with the M41 LAAG blazing. They immediately took out the two jackals and charged through the middle of the Covenant formation and took out two grunts. Jack put the Mongoose into a slide and took out the remaining grunt. The grunt smacked against the Mongoose's side and sprayed blue blood all over Jack and Dexter. The Warthog and the Mongoose worked together with flame and lead to kill the red elite. Two jocks from the school snuck

out from behind a car and killed the burning elite with a titanium baseball bat and a shot put to the head.

"Hostiles eliminated, transports it's clear" said the Warthog driver.

"Hey kids get back to the school" ordered Jack

"Yes sir" said the one with the bat that was now soaked with blue blood.

Then overhead the Longsword destroyed the two Banshees with a combination of Archer Missiles and 50 cal machinegun fire. The burning carcasses of the covenant fighter crafts fell into the school's football stadium.

"Shit, not our field" said the Jock with the shot put as he ran to the school.

The transports drove up to the High School's entrance and lowered the personnel loading ramps. Jack, Dexter, and the Warthog crew got off their rides and helped everyone get on the transport.

"Bless you child, you saved us" said an old woman.

"Any time mam" said Dexter

"Okay round 'em up and move 'em out" said the warthog driver.

While Dexter and Jack were saving the day at St. Vincent Keith and Juan were collecting citizens from Ironwood High School. They were just coming up to the High School a purple sea shell shaped craft descended from the sky and dropped two 12' feet tall organisms fell from it. Juan ordered the troop transports to go to a safe location. The organism was dressed in blue armor and had a massive shield attached to its right arm and huge cannon attached to its right. Immediately after they landed they turned on the school and a green light emitted from their cannons. They both fired as the Mongoose screamed toward them. Massive twin balls of energy hurtled toward the school and impacted upon the side of the school. They melted the surrounding stone bricks into lava and left two massive holes in the school. Juan stopped the Mongoose about 100 yards from them. Keith raised his S2 AM Sniper Rifle and fired four shots at the first creatures head and reloaded.

"Shit, why the hell isn't he dead?" Keith exclaimed

"That might not be their weak spot" speculated Juan

"Then where do I shoot?" asked Keith

"I donno" said Juan as two more balls of energy accelerated towards them.

"JUAN GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE" yelled Keith

Juan punched the accelerator lurched from under the twin balls of plasma and they impacted only 6 feet behind them, it was a wonder that the Mongooses tires did not melt. Then Juan went on offence and floored it too the blue warriors.

"What are you doing?" questioned Keith

"Get on the gun in the back" ordered Juan

Juan got on the 30 cal M23 LAAG and put his S2 in its gun rack as Juan slid in front of the blue clad warriors with the tail end of the Mongoose facing them. Keith opened up the M23 and peppered them with armor piercing rounds close range. They brought up their shields to block the rounds and slowly backed up as Keith concentrated fire on each one in turn.

"GET BEHIND THEM" yelled Keith over the noise of the M23

Juan slid the Mongoose around and Keith opened fire on their bare orange backs. The blue combatants screamed in agony and fell in pools of their own orange blood.

"HA, you were owned covy!" bragged Juan

"Hey guys you can come out now, we killed the scary aliens for you" said Keith over the radio. Juan and Keith got off the Mongoose, collected their weapons from various places on their ride, and went to check for survivors. They entered the commons of Ironwood but there was no one to be found.

"Maybe they hid in the bomb shelter" said Juan

"Where is the bomb shelter? Wait, I can find it. Command I need an inferred satellite photograph to locate civilians in Ironwood High School" said Keith over the radio

"Submitting Request" said an artificial female voice. A moment later another non-artificial voice came over the radio

"Okay Private Pounds, I will have your picture in approximately 30 seconds" said the Vic the command operator.

29 seconds later Vic came back and said "take a right from your current position and walk down the hallway about 50 feet and go down a stairwell on your left. At the bottom on the right there is a hatch. Open the hatch and there are approximately 30 people in the bomb shelter."

"Thanks Vic" said Keith

"I'll tell you if you go the wrong way" said Vic

"How?" said Keith

"This is a live feed I can see exactly where you are" said Vic

"Well that's comforting" said Juan as they started following Vic's instructions.

After a few minutes they had descended the stairway and were at the hatch.

"Anybody down there?" yelled Juan

"We're down here" replied several people in muffled voices.

Keith opened the hatch and started helping people up the ladder that led down into the bomb shelter.

"Okay we are going out, if you want to live you will do exactly what we say" ordered Keith

"Keith I'll take point, you pull up the rear" said Juan

"Got it, lets go" said Keith

Juan led the group through the hallways and to the front doors without incident.

"Keith get up here and check for snipers" said Juan

Keith walked up to the doors but did not open them for the fear of alerting Covenant snipers to their presents. Keith looked through the glass through the reflection of his boot knife and saw that the soldiers piloting the troop carriers were dead. Keith aimed through the window and saw two jackals armed with strange looking rifles. As Keith zoomed in on the first jackals the crosshairs on his computerized scope compensated for going through glass and the wind outside by the laser sensory device on his scope.

"The drivers are dead and there are two Jackals on the surrounding roof tops, move the civilians into some cover, I'm taking them out" said Keith.

"Get back" whispered Juan to the civilians

Keith made his final adjustments and fired on the first Jackal. The glass exploded into pieces and the 114mm APFSDS Anti-materiel round put a quarter sized hole in the Jackals head. The Jackal absorbed the impact of the round and did a back flip and landed face down with a wet smack. Keith quickly aimed at the second Jackal and fired. This round hit the Jackal in the neck and disconnected his head from his body. Then Keith ducked behind a brick wall with Juan.

"Vic, can you use your fancy computer to locate more snipers" asked Keith

"Sorry Pounds, the covenant found my satellite and destroyed it" said Vic

"Shit" swore Keith

"Did you get them?" asked Juan

"Yes but I don't know if there are more" replied Keith

"Ask Vic" suggested Juan

"They destroyed our satellite" explained Keith

"Shit" repeated Juan

"I'm going to look for more, help me spot them" said Keith

Juan and Keith slowly walked out of the school doors.

"Roof 3 O'clock" pointed Juan

Keith fired a single round at the Jackals head.

"Eliminated" concluded Keith

Juan fired a short burst and took out another Jackal.

"Hostile at 1 O'clock eliminated" reported Juan

Finally the pair got to the truck and Juan reached in to get their dog tags and pulled them out of the transport and laid them on the ground.

"Vic we need to reach the civilians, how can we do that, they don't have radios?" asked Juan

"I got it" said Vic as 15 cell phones rung "you can talk now"

"Can anyone down their drive a stick" asked Juan

"Yes" replied a female voice

"Okay I'll come up and get you, the rest of you stay put" ordered Juan "Keith cover me"

Keith moved from behind the transport and shot one Jackal on a roof top as Juan ran back to the school. Keith aimed at another Jackal that had sighted in Juan. Just as the Jackal was about to pull the trigger Keith pulled his and shot off his right arm. The Jackals arm reflexively contracted and a bolt of energy missed Juan by 6 feet. Juan ran even faster when he heard the bolt impact near him and Juan jumped through the hole that Keith had made with his first shot. Juan rolled on the linoleum floor of the high school and ducked behind a brick wall. Then he just sat and caught his breath.

"Who was it that said they could drive" asked Juan

"It was me" said a 16 year old girl with brown hair and a petite form.

"You must have just gotten your license" exclaimed Juan

"Nope, I've had mine for 4 years" said the girl

"How?" asked Juan

"I live on a farm; you can get your license much earlier when you live on a farm" said the girl

"Well let me see it" asked Juan

The girl gave her wallet to Juan from her back pocket. "What no purse" Juan thought but sure enough the license was real and her name was Candice McKenzie.

"Come on Candice, we need to get out of here." ordered Juan

"Okay" replied Candice.

"Keith are there any more snipers out there" asked Juan over the radio

"As far as I can tell" replied Keith

"Let's go" ordered Juan

Juan and Candice ran to the transport with Keith covering them the whole way there.

"So this is your driver?" asked Keith

"She said she could drive" defended Juan

"Okay, these snipers will kill all of the civilians in this place if we" said Keith as a beam of energy grazed Keith's calf. Keith aimed his sniper and put a hole in the Jackals head. Juan took the bandana of his head and tied it around his calf. Keith cursed under his breath. "As I was saying, we need to get the truck up to the entrance if we are to get them out alive."

"When I am driving won't I be exposed to the snipers" asked Candice.

"I will kill all of the snipers before they can kill you" said Keith.

"Are you sure you can do that, you did just get hit?" questioned Candice.

Keith brought up his gun, swiveled, and fired at a Jackal. The Jackal did a back flip and landed in a puddle of his own blood and entrails.

"I'm sure" reassured Keith "get in the transport"

Candice got in the transport and Juan helped Keith up and then got in the roofless troop carrying section to kill snipers. Keith fired twice and two Jackals fell and Juan released a 3 round burst to take down another one. Then Candice rolled the transport up the steps to the school and parallel parked it next to the door.

"Good job Candice" said Keith as he sniped another Jackal "Juan you help the civilians up on the transport"

"Got it" replied Juan as he started lifting civilians into the transport. After about two minutes Juan had loaded all of the civilians.

"Keith, I think its time to leave" said Juan as he looked at the roof tops one last time before he jumped from the transport to the tarmac and threw his leg over the Mongoose. Juan started the Mongoose and drove it over to the side of the transport.

"Keith get in" yelled Juan

Keith sniped a Jackal and then lowered him self from the transport, nursing his wounded leg, he hopped from the foot of the transport to

the Mongoose. Juan helped him on the back.

"Lets go" Juan ordered Candice over the cell phone radio hybrid.

Candice backed the transport off the stairway and rolled into the street.

A wounded Kig-yar in the past minute had crawled to where his dismembered limb lay with its icy claws still gripping the handle of his "Beam Rifle" as the humans called it. They had no right to name their sacred gifts of the Gods with their barbaric tongue. He had even heard stories that they had also named his species Jackal after the primitive four legged beasts on their filthy planet. The wounded Kig-yar pried his own dead fingers off his weapon and crawled over to the edge of the roof. The Kig-yar prayed to the gods for accuracy and hit the firing stud. He missed and hit the spare tire on the back. The filthy human took his primitive projectile weapon and fired it directly at the Kig-yar and added another wound to his collection; a quarter unit diameter hole in his neck. The Kig-yar said his last prayer through his leaking gullet and transcended the physical.

While Juan and Keith were killing Jackals at Ironwood High School, Greg and Frank were defending two troop transport carriers with the help of a warthog team. They were headed to Jefferson Technical University. JTU was a massive university with a total of 20 buildings and 10 acres of land. This presented them with a problem, Where were the civilians, they were not briefed on the subject and it was expected that they would search all of the buildings.

"Frank, we don't have time to search all of the buildings, what the hell are we going to do" asked Greg.

"I don't know but those eggheads at command might know" suggested Frank.

"Okay then call command" said Greg.

"Command, does anyone copy, we need assistance locating civilians in JTU" Frank said over the radio.

"Processing Request" an artificial female voice over the radio.

"Great just what we need, chicks giving us orders" complained Greg

"Okay Private Frank I can do just what you need but it will take a second, I'm doing the same thing for the people at Ironwood High" explained Vic.

"Okay just make it quick" said Frank.

Ten seconds later Vic came over the radio "Okay the civilians are not scattered over to much of the university. They are all in the cafeteria and the J .A .McCoy gymnasium. The other buildings are empty or the civilians are dead"

"Thanks Vic, if we have any more problems we'll call you" said

Frank

"Got it, Vic out"

The transport caravan arrived at JTU in another five minutes. Frank and Greg, who were handling point, did not see any enemy forces on the north side of campus. They followed the road signs to the cafeteria first. Frank saw two teenagers spray painting obscene words and gang symbols on one of the dormitories. Frank asked Greg to stop the Mongoose. Frank put his rocket launcher in its rack beside him and opened his bow rack. Frank put an arrow with a field point and ratty fletchings on the string, attached his magnetic mechanical release to a steel bead on the string, drew the string back, and hit the release trigger. The ratty arrow flew true and pierced the spray paint can of one of the hoodlums and slammed it in to the brick wall behind it. The paint can sprayed red paint all over the place but mostly on the two delinquents.

"What the fuck, dog?" exclaimed one wigger with his hat on sideways before he turned around to face the archer who had destroyed his can. When he turned around he saw two soldiers fully armed and one of them happened to be almost 7 feet tall. "Sorry dog, my bad, I'll just leave now"

"Get on the transport" ordered Frank

The kids climbed in the transport.

"Well I showed them" commented Frank

"You just shot an arrow into a group of civilians, if they report this you are screwed" warned Greg as he fired up the engine and put it in drive

"Don't worry about it, I just did a act if public service, and do you think they will take the side of a member of the armed forces of Jerico or that punk kid" defended Frank.

"Good point" agreed Greg as he turned a corner into the street that the cafeteria was on. A few minutes after that the caravan pulled into the cafeteria. Frank, Greg, and the people in the warthog hopped off their rides. Frank quickly swept his rifle around the campus to check for hostiles. He found none.

"Area secured, move into the building" reported Greg.

The evacuation crew moved into the building.

"Vic exactly where are the Civilians" said Greg over the radio

"I have located human life signs in the basement of the cafeteria, and by the way the first transport still has its lights on, you might want to turn them off." Vic explained

"Thanks Vic" replied Greg.

The evac team moved towards the basement and walked down the steps. A knife flew from somewhere in the basement and missed Greg by mere centimeters and hit the concrete wall with a clang. Greg jumped back, flipped off the safety of his weapon, and flicked the switch blade

bayonet on his M-4 to the extended position. Then Greg jumped down the steps with Frank, who was wielding his bow with a hunting arrow on the string. They checked the area and only found a 16 year old boy with a butcher's knife in one fist and three steak knives in his other.

"Were on the same team, kid" explained Greg.

The boy lowered his knives "Sorry"

"Where are the rest of you" asked Frank.

"In the next room" replied the kid.

The kid led them to the other civilians

"Okay, we've come to transport you to the Alamo, Just come up to the transport" explained Greg.

Frank led the way with his massive bow and Greg took up the rear with his M-4. Frank led them into the transport and then made his way to the Mongoose. Greg was already there and he started the Mongoose and it purred like a cat.

"Lets move, next stop the J.A. McCoy Gymnasium" said Greg

The caravan moved out to and quickly made it to the gym and with a little help from Vic they found the civilians and escorted them to the transport.

"Hey Greg, I think this is too easy, it doesn't feel right" said Frank

"I know, just hope it says that way" assured Greg

The procession of vehicles drove back the way it came and out the entrance of JTU. Then Frank saw what would shatter his conception that this mission was easy. There were a squadron of 8 ghosts waiting for them just outside the gateway of JTU. Frank let loose his arrow, it flew true and pierced the head of a red armored elite. The elite would have fallen off his ride but the ghost's restraints kept him in place and his foot did not yield from the gas pedal.

"Transports get the hell out of here" ordered Greg as Frank put his bow away and got out his M19 Rocket Launcher. The transports put it in reverse and moved behind a nearby building. Frank flipped off the many safeties on the M19 and loaded two 102mm rockets in their tubes as the warthog opened up the tri-barrel M41 LAAG. The LAAG destroyed the ghost with the incapacitated driver in a ball of plasma fuel. Frank put the Launcher in firing position, put his eye up to the digital sights, and fired. Just as his arrows went true so the rocket did. The shaped charge detonated on the ghost and exploded. The ghost was a momentary sun with its own orbiting debris until gravity took hold and stopped the amazing spectacle. 2 down 6 to go. Four sniper shots rang out but none of them hit their marks and just stopped dead on the ghost's armor. 5 of the ghosts ganged up on the warthog while they sent one to keep the Mongoose busy. As the solitary ghost came within the range that rockets would hurt them just as much as the ghost. Frank took the spare tire off of the back of the Mongoose and threw it at the ghost as Greg performed evasive

maneuvers to avoid the ghost's twin plasma cannons. The tire hit the elite but it had no effect but to make him blink because of his armor. Greg spun the Mongoose 90° with a skillful drift move that put them out of the way of the enemy cannons yet again. Frank had an idea and reached around Greg and let out 30 feet of wench cable that slid under the Mongoose between the tires. Greg put the Mongoose into another drift as Frank switched directions on the Mongoose so his back was to Greg's. Then Frank leaned over the back of the Mongoose as a stream of plasma pulverized the thin air where Frank had just vacated. Frank grabbed the wench cable and pulled it up with him back into the Mongoose seat. Then Frank used the magnetic clamp to make a sliding loop in the rope. Then Frank took the rope and swung it around a few times and let it go. It encircled the solitary elite and the Mongoose to which the cable was attached pulled the loop taut around the elite's waist pinning his arms to his body. The poor elite looked down, horrified.

"HIT IT" yelled Frank

Greg replied with a punch to the accelerator.

"Swing him" ordered Frank

Greg twisted the steering bar and the Mongoose swung the elite in a wide horizontal arc until the cable hit a telephone pole. The cable began to wrap its self around the pole on the incapacitated elites second pass another mounted elite passed to close to his circle of death and was decapitated by the spinning wire. After about 10 passes that were getting increasingly faster the helpless elite slammed into the telephone pole and his mount exploded and killed him instantly after so many minutes of embarrassment. One plus side of having the ghost explode was that it melted the wench wire and freed the Mongoose from the trap it had set on its self. The Mongoose ceased to burn its rubber in one place and left two black smears on the grey concrete as it bolted to help the 'hog. Unfortunately the 5 ghosts who were now only 3 had already had their way with the doomed 'hog. The allied warthog was in ruins. Its main power supply had exploded and killed all of the occupants. Frank picked up his rocket launcher and quickly fired both tubes at the first two ghosts and they exploded into flaming wrecks. While Frank was reloading the launcher Greg had flipped on the emergency break. As the Mongoose was sliding to a stop Greg lifted his M-4 and fired a single 3 round burst at the head of the elite in the final ghost. The three armor piercing rounds penetrated his shields and blew through his alien skull, killing him.

"Nice shot" commented Frank

"Thanks"

"Hostiles eliminated, you can come out now" reported Frank over the radio as Greg got off the Mongoose to gather his fallen comrades dog tags.

Two troop transports filed out of behind a building and rolled towards the surviving combatants. The drivers of the transports looked upon the destroyed warthog with sorrow but quickly hid it. Their sacrifices would be a drop in a sea of blood that this war would create.

After ten minutes all transports that were guarded by patrol 11 had made their way back to the Alamo. Patrol Double One alone had saved 150 people from the bloody hands of the Covenant. But five lives were lost. Is this fair? It was not for them to know. Their job was just to complete missions not to question.

End
file.